

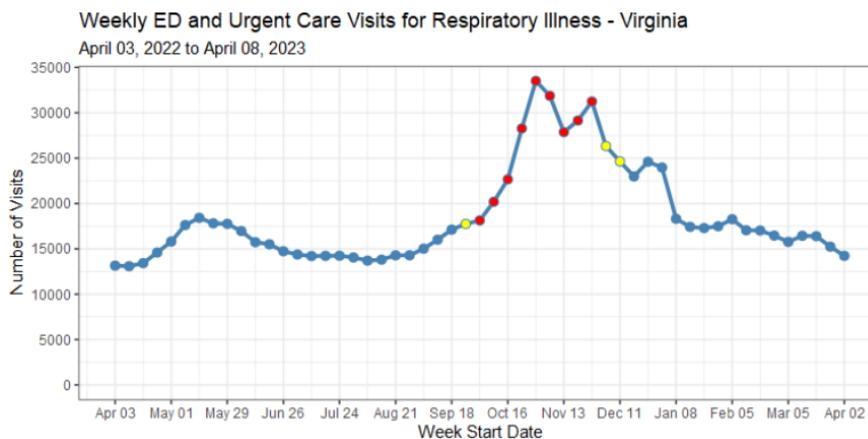
April 14, 2023

Key Takeaways

- All but two Virginia localities remain at low COVID-19 community levels, and all regions are at minimal influenza levels (though statewide the influenza level is low). OEP will continue to provide information on COVID-19, influenza, and other respiratory diseases in this update, but is pausing the respiratory disease section until fall.
- The White House declared Xylazine an emerging threat when mixed with fentanyl. Xylazine-positive overdose deaths increased in all four Census regions between 2020 to 2021, with the largest increase in the South Region, which includes Virginia.
- Pertussis cases in the US had a 48% increase from 2021 to 2022 based on the CDC's provisional reports. Nineteen cases have been identified in Maine, which is twice the amount reported during this time last year.

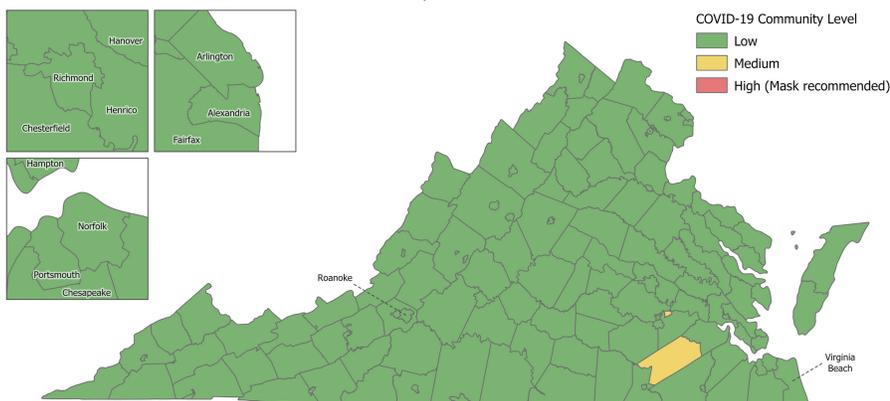
Key Figures

Respiratory Disease Activity



CDC COVID-19 Community Levels

As of April 13, 2023



Source: [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#)

COVID-19

24%

Chance that the WHO will identify a new COVID-19 Variant of Concern in 2023. (Metaculus forecast)

15%

Chance that Virginia will experience a COVID-19 case surge before **September** 2023. (Metaculus forecast)

Mpox

3

The total number of mpox cases expected in Virginia in Q2 (April - June) 2023. (Metaculus forecast)

Xylazine

1,127%

Increase in Xylazine-positive overdose deaths from 2020 to 2021 in the US Census' South region, which includes Virginia.

Spotlight: Xylazine

Spotlight

Region	2020	2021	Percent Increase
Northeast	631	1,281	103%
South	116	1,423	1,127%
Midwest	57	351	516%
West	4	34	750%

Number of Xylazine-Positive Overdose Deaths by Region. Source: [DEA](#).

- In Virginia, statewide **rates per 10,000 ED visits for all overdose types increased or remained stable** in Q1 2023 compared to Q4 2022. Compared to Q1 2022, however, statewide rates for all drug, opioid, heroin and stimulant decreased or remained stable.

Xylazine

- Xylazine declared an emerging threat by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP)** when mixed with [Fentanyl](#). ONDCP noted that Xylazine, a veterinary medicine not approved for human use, is having a growing role in overdose deaths in every region of the United States. Xylazine is a non-opioid, complicating efforts to reverse overdoses with Naloxone.
- "Emerging threat" is a new category for fast-growing drug dangers created in 2019.** Criteria for designation, [published](#) in 2022, include an increase in overdoses, substance use disorder, hospitalization or treatment admissions, generally or among a particular cohort, in at least three of four [census regions](#). This is the first designation in the new category.
- Xylazine-positive overdose deaths increased 1,127% in the South census region**, which includes Virginia, between 2020 and 2021 - the largest increase. DEA forensic laboratory identifications increased by 193% in the South, also the largest increase.
- The designation follows earlier alerts from the FDA and DEA targeting Xylazine.** In late February, the FDA [issued](#) an [Import Alert](#), while the DEA issued a [Public Safety Alert](#) on March 21.

Other News

- CDC releases [health advisory on Marburg virus disease outbreaks](#). Currently, there are only cases in Tanzania and Equatorial Guinea and no evidence that these outbreaks are related. No enhanced domestic travel measures are recommended, as the overall risk in the United States is considered low at this time.
- Avian flu found in mammals, but several mutations are required to effectively infect humans and cause pandemic.** The [avian flu](#) has been identified in pets, including a dog in Ontario that [died](#) after contracting the avian flu and [several cats](#) in the US. These occurrences are rare and experts say the [risk to pets](#) is very low. [Scientists believe](#) a minimum of three protein mutations are needed before the avian flu can become transmissible between humans.
- Many countries are experiencing measles outbreaks.** Outbreaks have been identified in [Uganda](#), [South Africa](#) and [Armenia](#). In the US, the Hawaii Department of Health is [investigating](#) a confirmed case related to international travel. Ohio has [reported](#) another single measles case after [declaring](#) a recent outbreak over.
- Pertussis outbreaks in Maine, Canada, and New Zealand.** The largest outbreak with [114 cases](#) has been reported by Alberta Health Services and another [12 cases](#) by Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. Another [19 cases](#) have been reported in Maine, which is twice the amount reported during this time last year.

Reported Pertussis Cases and Percent Hospitalization by Age Group

Age	No. of Cases (% of total)	Age Inc /100,000	% Hospitalized by age**
< 6 mos	139 (5.8)	7.8	17.1
6-11 mos	130 (5.4)	7.3	4.9
1-6 yrs	622 (26.0)	2.7	1.9
7-10 yrs	176 (7.4)	1.1	0.0
11-19 yrs	231 (9.7)	0.6	1.2
20+ yrs	1,089 (45.6)	0.4	11.2
Unknown Age	1 (0.0)	N/A	N/A
Total	2,388 (100)	0.7*	6.9

*Total incidence per 100,000 calculated from 2,387 cases with age reported.
**Calculated from those with known hospitalization status.

2022 Provisional Pertussis Surveillance Report . Source: [CDC](#)